

## **MERIT SYSTEM COMMISSION**

**MISSION:** The Commission is required to hear appeals from covered permanent status employees regarding their dismissal, suspension or demotion. The Commission also has approval authority regarding several portions of the examination process for Deputy Sheriffs and recommendation authority regarding the appointment of the human resources director and the classification plan.

**FORMATION AUTHORITY:** A.R.S. § 11-353 (county employees merit system commission), and Board of Supervisors resolution of August 6, 1975 (acceptance of resolution of the Judges of the Superior Court known as the “Judicial Merit System – Maricopa County”).

**COMPOSITION:** A.R.S. § 11-353: (county employees) “A. Upon the adoption of a county employee merit system the Board of Supervisors shall appoint a county employee merit system commission to assist in administering the system. The commission shall consist of five members, each of whom shall hold office for a term of four years and until his successor is appointed and qualified. Of the members first appointed, two shall serve for a two-year term, two for a three-year term and one shall serve for a four-year term, and such members shall determine by lot the length of their terms. Appointment to fill a vacancy caused by other than expiration of term shall be for the unexpired portion of the term. B. Members of the commission shall be selected from among the qualified electors of the county. No more than three of such members shall be from the same political party.” Bylaws, Section 9 (A): “No member of the Commission shall be a member of any local, state, or national committee of a political party or an officer or member of a committee in any partisan political club or organization, or shall hold, be a candidate for any elective public office except as permitted by this Resolution.” A.R.S. § 38-1002: (law enforcement employees) “A. In each county coming within the provisions of this article, there shall be a merit system council which shall consist of five members appointed by the Board of Supervisors of the county. No more than three members shall belong to the same political party and all members shall be persons having recognized knowledgeable interest in the merit principles of personnel administration, and are prohibited from delegating their authority.” (Section B pertains to cities and towns) “C. The term of each member of a council shall be five years, one term to expire December 31 each year, except that a member shall continue to serve until his successor is duly appointed and qualified. Of the members of the council first appointed, one shall be appointed for a term ending December 31, 1970, and one each for terms ending one, two, three and four years thereafter. Upon the expiration of the term of a member a successor shall be appointed for a full term of five years. Appointment to fill a vacancy resulting other than from expiration of a term shall be for the unexpired portion of the term only. D. The council shall hold regular quarterly meetings and in addition, may hold such special meetings as the chairman of the council deems necessary. A chairman and vice-chairman shall be elected by the members of the council in January of each year and the chairman shall not be permitted to succeed himself. Meetings of the council shall be open to the public and executive sessions may be held as provided by law. E. Any one of the following shall constitute the resignation of a council member and authorize the appointing authority to appoint a new member to fill the unexpired portion of the term so vacated: 1. Absence from three consecutive quarterly meetings. 2. Becoming a candidate for any elective public office. 3. Accepting any appointive office of employment in the service of the state, or a county, city or town. F. Members of the council shall receive subsistence and travel expenses incurred while traveling from their places of residence to the place meetings are held or in the performance of other duties of the council in the same manner as is provided by law for state officers.”

**DUTIES AND POWERS:** A.R.S. § 11-354: (County Employees) “The commission shall perform such duties and exercise such powers as are necessary to carry out the provisions of this article.” By Policy: Prepares rules they may find necessary or appropriate for the administration of the personnel system. Represents the public’s interest in the improvement of personnel administration in the County. Advises the Board of Supervisors, judges, county manager and the human resources director of problems concerning personnel administration. Advises and assists in fostering the interest in institutions of learning, civic, professional and employee organizations in the improvement of personnel standards for County employees. Reviews any personnel action which it considers desirable concerning the administration of personnel in the County and to make suggestions. Makes appropriate reports and recommendations for improvements.

A.R.S. §38-1003 (law enforcement employees) “The Council, pursuant to recognized merit system principles of public employment, shall from time to time: 1. Classify or reclassify all positions occupied by law enforcement officers within the branch of government employing such officer and recommend schedules of salary and other compensation payable for such officer classification. 2. Fix and refix standards and qualifications of all positions so classified. 3. Provide a plan for fair and impartial selection, appointment, retention and separation or removal from service by resignation or dismissal of all classified law enforcement officers. The provisions of paragraph 4 of this section shall apply to appointments. 4. Provide a plan for promotion of law enforcement officers which shall give appropriate consideration to qualifications, record of performance, seniority and conduct within the field of law enforcement. Vacancies within the department, shall be on the basis of competitive examination. Whenever a vacancy occurs within a department the council shall upon request certify to the head of the department the names of five officers in the order of their relative excellence in the competitive examination from which certified list the appointment or promotion may be made. 5. Adopt such rules and regulations as may be necessary for the orderly administration of the provisions of this article. 6. Hear and review appeals from any order of the department head in connection with suspension, demotion or dismissal of a classified law enforcement officer. The council’s determination thereon shall be final except on appeal as provided in 38-1004.”

**MEETINGS:** Regular meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 1:30 p.m. in the Human Resources Merit Commission Hearing Room, Suite 221, Second Floor, Administration Building, 302 W. Jefferson Street, Phoenix, Arizona.

**LIAISON:** Janice Stratton, Human Resources Merit System Administrator, (602) 506-5007.